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characters, and without any suspicion of disrespect, "God bless our Librarian." I refer of course, to the faithful efficient librarian with a proper conception of her own duties who should be honoured in the community by virtue of her position entailing such profound responsibilities. Her smallest act of official consideration, to her juvenile readers especially, leaves a widening ripple of influence, the far-reaching effect of which can scarcely be over-estimated. The librarian, unless it is obviously inopportune, should also without doubt be invited to attend every meeting of the trustees and share their undivided confidence, and the importance of her position and her individuality should never be dominated or over-shadowed by the personality of the trustee. Her suggestions wherever possible should be respected, deferred to and acted upon, and every point strained to give her a living wage as nearly commensurate as circumstances will permit, with a due and extreme regard for the importance of her task,—at best, a somewhat thankless one.

I am a strong advocate for Sunday opening wherever it can be accomplished without interfering with the conscience or freedom of the employee, and if exempt from hardship. I further believe that every trustee should permit the purchase of books relating to any religious belief providing that they are not of a contro-

versial nature, and that he should actively co-operate with the librarian in the selection of the really best current literature, both books and periodicals, giving fiction, say a 50% maximum at the most.

Last, but not least I maintain that it should be a man trustee's greatest pleasure and manifest duty to secure the co-operation of at least two capable women workers to share his responsibilities as co-trustees.

Discussion brought out the interesting fact that the Ontario library association included in its membership almost as many trustees as librarians. Mr. Bowker suggested that those from the states interested in library development should seek to follow the Canadian example in this respect, and obtain more active participation from trustees in the library association. Dr. C. R. Charteris, president of the Ontario library association, gave further word on the relation of trustees to the library organization in Canada, and Mr. T. W. Banton, trustee of the Toronto public library, who had been present at the Magnolia conference, spoke of his disappointment at finding so little participation by trustees in that meeting. The officers of the section were re-elected for another year: Chairman, W. T. Porter, trustee Cincinnati public library; secretary, T. L. Montgomery, librarian Pennsylvania State library.

PUBLIC DOCUMENTS ROUND TABLE

A Public Documents Round Table was held on July 1, Mr. George S. Godard, State librarian of Connecticut, in the chair. Miss Elizabeth M. Smith of New York state library was appointed secretary.

The preliminary report of the Committee on public documents already printed was read, in order to bring briefly before the session the status of the bills now before Congress relating to the printing, binding and distribution of public documents.

The chairman reported his efforts to bring to the conference the Superintendent

of Documents, Mr. August Donath, to present in person a paper on the new printing bill. A failure of Congress to provide in the appropriations for traveling expenses for this and similar purposes, made this impossible. The chairman, Mr. Godard, reported that he had laid before the Senate Committee on appropriations the advisability of appropriating funds to pay expenses of the Superintendent of Documents, or some other competent official, while trying to get into closer relations with the depository and other document

libraries. The secretary read a letter from the clerk of the Committee on appropriations reporting that Mr. Godard's letter would be called to the attention of the committee at the proper time. The following letter from Mr. Donath on the subject of public documents, dealing especially with the new printing bill, was read by Mr. Geo. N. Cheney of the Court of Appeals library, Syracuse, N. Y.

Office of Superintendent of Documents,
Washington June 8, 1912.

My dear Mr. Godard:

Complying with your kind invitation to send to your committee a paper dealing with the subject of public documents from a standpoint of interest mutual to your association and to this office, I herewith submit a few words covering the subject as briefly as its intelligent discussion will permit. I deem it a privilege to be able to address those to whom this is a live subject, and regret all the more that Congress does not seem inclined to endorse recommendations, repeatedly made, that would bring the members of your association and the official in charge of this branch of the public service into more intimate intercourse. This would surely be in the interest of better service on the part of this office and a clearer interchange of expert opinion that could not be otherwise than beneficial to the cause which the law creating our connection was intended to serve.

The idea underlying the legislation that created "designated depository libraries" was undoubtedly the intent to create five or six hundred places throughout this broad land where the history of the country, as expressed in the printed page, should be accessible to the public. A very good intention, and one very largely impractical. When it is remembered that the yearly output of public documents is nearly a thousand, and that a steadily increasing amount of shelf room is required to make all these accessible, even those who only have a superficial acquaintance with the subject will see that to live up to the requirement which accompanies the designation is beyond the ability of perhaps the major

number of the libraries now regularly supplied. Only in the larger cities and the most prosperous communities are there libraries able to cope with this "contract." Added to this cause for failure to carry out the intent of thus creating permanent places accessible to the student of the history of his country has been the right of a Senator or Representative to change the designation at the beginning of a Congress, thus leaving the discarded institution with a partial supply of public documents, and starting the new selection with a void that is never filled. Poor business, surely. And it is this condition that the official now in charge of the Public Documents Division has worked very hard to have amended.

I am glad to be able to state that light seems to have broken on this matter. After repeated searching inquiries on the part of the Printing Investigation Commission the true situation seems to be understood, and the measure popularly known as the New Printing Bill, which deals with the whole subject of the public printing, promises to establish a connection between the libraries of the land and this office that shall be of more benefit to the public and at much less expense than the operation of the law of January 12, 1895, permitted. At present writing this bill has passed the Senate, has been favorably reported, with amendments, to the House, and appears to be in shape for speedy final action. It contains many provisions that make for economy in the public printing, but I will only mention what is of more immediate interest to the libraries of the country.

To begin with, the law will permit selection, at stated intervals, of the class of publications that a designated library is able or desirous to handle. What a relief that will be can best be appreciated by the officials in charge of the smaller libraries. It will serve them, and it will likewise save money to the Government. The volume of literature sent out from here that later is returned can only be realized from personal observation. My personal acquaintance with it began on the day I took charge of this office. There were moun-

tains of it, and in a few months, so the Public Printer informed me, he desired to lay before the Committee on Printing his report recommending how much of the accumulation seemed worth returning into stock, and how much should be sold as waste paper. However, the subject has become so familiar to the law-making body that remedial action is now apparently in sight.

The bill likewise assures that permanency to a designated library without which the original intent, above fully stated, is defeated. Once designated, no change in the political representation in Congress from that particular locality will affect the library's status. Thus the two causes that have operated to nullify the intent to create permanent depositories of the country's history will be removed. And while the question of selection may at first seem somewhat of a problem to many librarians, I feel confident that this matter will soon work smoothly and satisfactorily. I should not forget to mention that besides the privilege of thus curtailing their receipts from this office, libraries may also, in certain cases, receive duplicates that they find desirable.

Among other provisions of the new bill that will appeal to your committee I may mention that it goes a long distance in carrying out the slogan, "one edition for one book," by taking out of the numbered Congressional series all annual and serial publications and those of which a Departmental edition has been printed, the only exception being the Messages of the Presidents and the Annual Reports of the heads of the nine Executive Departments. This elimination of document numbers will materially reduce the size of what is commonly known as the "sheep set," and I also expect that it will enable a speedier delivery of this class of publications, besides permitting a return to the old custom of placing the serial number on each volume.

I believe the foregoing covers in as condensed a form as the subject admits the matters just now of greatest interest in the dis-

cussion of the subject of public documents. I need not assure you, and through you your associates, of the earnest desire on the part of this office to co-operate to the fullest possible extent with the good work that the libraries of the country are doing in advancing the intelligence of a people whose will is the foundation of our Government. The greatest menace to a government of the people is Ignorance, and no agency is superior to the libraries of the land in combating this foe of free institutions.

In the hope that these remarks will be kindly received, and assuring you of my personal regard, I have the honor to be,

Very respectfully,
AUGUST DONATH,

Superintendent of Documents.

GEO. S. GODARD, Esq., Chairman,
Committee on Public Documents,
American Library Association.

Before discussion was opened, the secretary of the meeting read a courteous letter from Hon. Reed Smoot, Chairman of the Senate Committee on Printing, expressing regret at his inability to deliver at the Conference an address on the general topic of printing, binding and distribution of Government publications, and referring with appreciation to the intention of the A. L. A. Committee to deliver to him a concise report of the suggestions made by the librarians interested in Government publications. Discussions followed.

Mr. Henry J. Carr, a former president of the A. L. A. and a veteran document librarian, advocated concentrating the efforts of the association on getting the bill through in its present form, on the ground that it was now so nearly satisfactory, and had already been so long in preparation, that further delay would be unfortunate.

Mr. J. D. Thompson, formerly chief of the Department of Documents in the Library of Congress, now librarian of the Columbia University Law library, introduced the question of a limited distribution of bills. The following suggestions were made:

By Mr. Thompson (1) that public and private bills form separate numbered se-

ries, the former to be distributed to libraries requesting, or, if necessary, subscribing through the Superintendent of Documents, or (2) that the text of any bill under consideration should be included in the printed report on the same.

By Mr. Thorvald Solberg, United States Registrar of Copyrights, that every bill which has passed one house should be printed in a permanent form convenient for library use.

By Mr. Clement W. Andrews, librarian of the John Crerar library of Chicago, that bills not favorably acted upon should also be included in any scheme to be suggested; that better provision be at the same time recommended for supplying reports of hearings to interested libraries.

By Mr. William R. Reinick, chief of the Public Documents Department of the Philadelphia Free library, in favor of Mr. Thompson's suggestion of separate series for public and private bills, and of better distribution of reports of hearings.

By Mr. Herbert S. Hirshberg, reference librarian, Cleveland public library, that bills be printed in the Congressional Record.

By Miss Edith E. Clarke, now chief cataloger in the library of Syracuse university and formerly on the staff of the Superintendent of Documents, that the Superintendent of Documents be given a certain specified number of copies of bills to be distributed to libraries on request.

By Mr. R. R. Bowker, editor and publisher of the Publishers' weekly and the Library journal, that bills favorably reported be included in Committee reports; that reports of hearings be included in the document series; that the Superintendent of Documents be given the power to distribute, on request, copies of individual bills.

By Mr. Solberg, that texts of bills be included in committee reports whether reported favorably or not.

In conclusion the following resolution was introduced by Mr. Thompson:

RESOLVED, that the Committee on Public Documents recommend to the proper

Congressional authorities that there be appended to each Committee report on a public bill, when printed (1) the text of the bill and (2) the testimony taken if stenographically reported and not confidential.

This resolution was adopted.

Further suggestions regarding other provisions of the printing bill were made as follows:

By Mr. Thompson: That unbound numbered documents be distributed in advance of the bound volumes, and that librarians be given option as to the form they prefer.

By Mr. Andrews: That some provision be introduced which should place in the hands of some one higher in authority than the blanket clerk, the power to place documents in the confidential nondistributable class and thus keep out of that class documents of general library interest which are not confidential.

The chairman then introduced the subject of daily lists of documents, with a suggestion that lists be prepared in the Senate and Assembly Document Room and printed daily in the Congressional Record, of all documents received the day previous in the document rooms. Such a list should meet with favor from Congress because prompt notice of publication would be valuable to Congressmen as well as to libraries.

Doubts of its practicability were raised by Mr. Solberg and Mr. Andrews. The latter referred to the difficulty rising from the fact that the Congressional Record was published only during the sessions, and suggested that the public printer furnish the lists. Miss Laura A. Thompson considered the difficulty raised by Mr. Andrews a small one because fewer documents and documents of less immediate interest were issued when Congress was not in session.

Miss Clarke stated her opinion that the Superintendent of Documents should issue the list as a daily bulletin. Mr. Ernest Bruncken of the office of the United States Register of Copyrights, by letter advocated this plan. Mr. Godard stated that

the Superintendent of Documents was unwilling to undertake it. Mr. Thompson stated that the necessity of sending it out by mail daily made it impracticable. It was decided to take no action on this particular matter. The following resolution, however, was moved by Miss Clarke and carried:

WHEREAS: The reading public of the United States are looking more and more to the libraries and especially to the depository libraries, to supply to them and advise them about all the publications of the United States Government, and

WHEREAS: The librarians must of necessity largely depend for information as to these publications, upon the catalogs and bibliographical aids issued by the office of the Superintendent of Documents, and

WHEREAS: Promptness in the printing of these bibliographical aids is most essential to the timely use of current government material. Therefore be it

RESOLVED, That the librarians of the American Library Association assembled at Ottawa, respectfully urge the Superintendent of Documents to use all reasonable haste in the compilation, printing and distribution to libraries, of the Monthly Catalog of United States Public Documents and of the Document Catalog, so that they may be available in libraries as soon as possible after the periods covered by the same.

Mr. James I. Wyer, Jr., director of the New York state library, Albany, called attention to the withdrawal of free distribution of the specifications and drawings of United States patents, and moved the following resolution, which was carried:

RESOLVED: That the librarians of the for a limited free distribution of the bound volumes (or less desirable, the unbound volumes) of the Specifications and Drawings of the United States Patents, the Superintendent of Documents, perhaps, to designate or determine such libraries upon presentation of good reasons.

Mr. Charles H. Hastings, chief of the card section in the Library of Congress, expressed regret at the impossibility of

printing on Library of Congress printed cards the volume numbers of the documents in the Congressional series, since the documents were not assigned to volumes until some time after publication.

The following resolution, proposed by Mr. Thompson, was adopted:

RESOLVED: That the Committee on Public Documents recommend that arrangements be made at the Government Printing office for the assignment of bulletin or document numbers at a later stage than at present, in order that they may correspond more nearly with the order of publication, and that wherever possible, documents be assigned to their volumes in the Congressional series at the time of publication in order that the volume numbers may be used in cataloging.

Mr. Solberg called attention to the unsatisfactory method of numbering Treasury decisions and decisions of the Attorney General.

Attention was called to the House amendment making centralization of distributors in the office of the Superintendent of Documents obligatory to all departments. A similar provision was stricken out of the Senate appropriation bill.

Mr. Thompson and Mr. Solberg opposed obligatory centralization and suggested that the association register with the Senate Committee on Printing its disapproval on the grounds both of economy and of promptness of service.

Mr. Bowker expressed a hope that the association would strongly endorse the attempt now being made to establish a legislative reference department at the national capital.

Mr. Wyer moved that the Committee on Public Documents send a resolution of thanks to the Senate and House Committees on Printing and to the Superintendent of Documents, for their uniform courtesy and careful consideration of the several suggestions made.

This motion was carried. The meeting then adjourned.